Doctrines of Faith

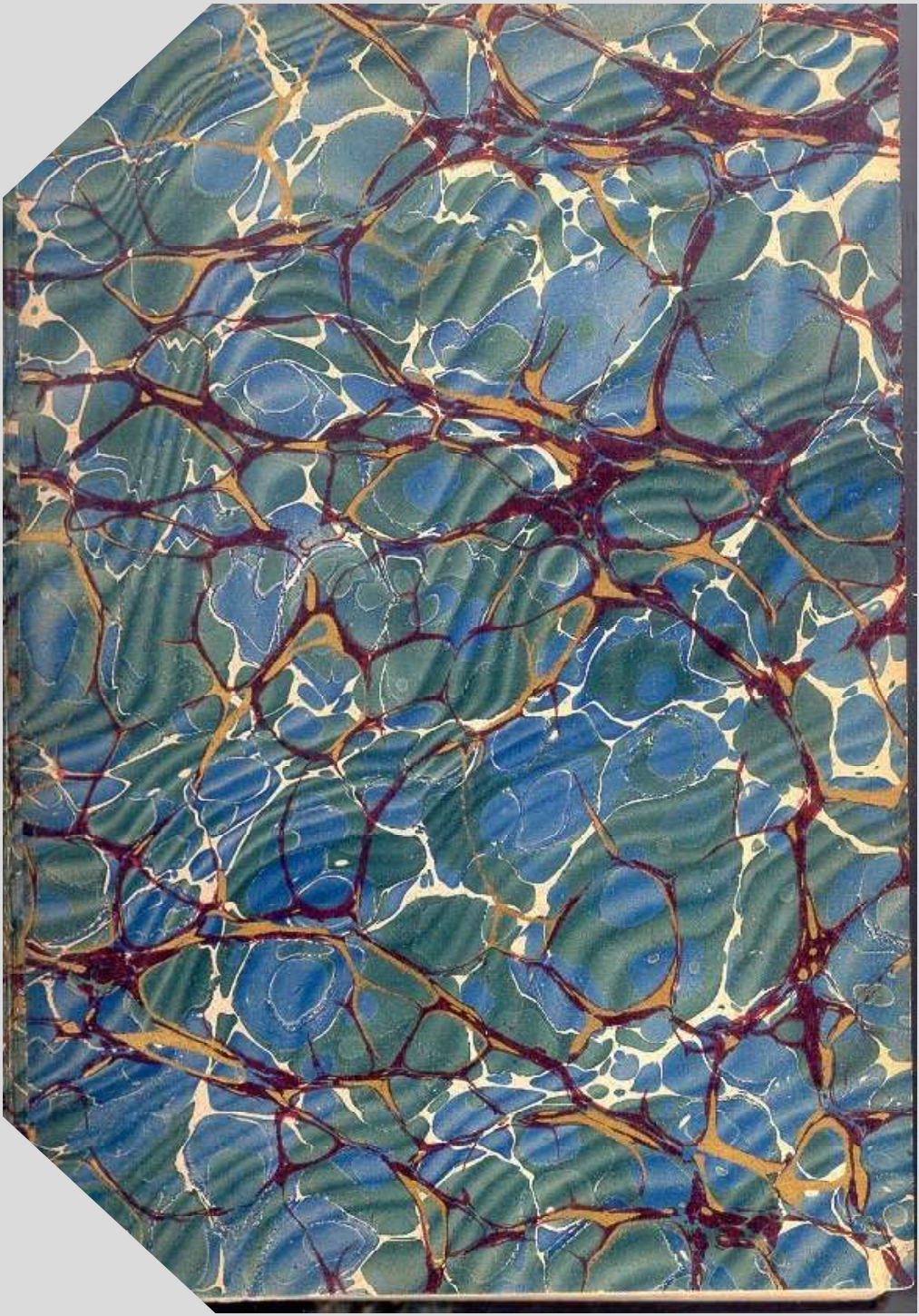
7

Soteriology

A seminary resource by

Lionel Hartley

(Amangelia Academy, Morrisett)



Doctrines of Faith, Vol. 7

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Doctrines of Faith, Vol. 7: Soteriology
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This is NOT an Encyclopaedia of Religions as the focus is solely on tenets for salvation.

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Foreword

Your author, Lionel Hartley, conducted interviews and extensive studies in public and university libraries (including his own) and is reasonably confident in the accuracy of the research presented in this volume.

He expresses gratitude to the one-hundred-and-twenty-two faith leaders that he interviewed from different religions and denominations and for their willingness to share the tenets of their faith.

Additional material sourced in Australia from university and public libraries in Newcastle and Avondale College in Cooranbong, Australia.

Much of this material was first published in 1974 in ‘The Salvation Encyclopedia’ also by Lionel Hartley, and updated for this publication.

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Preface

Three very basic questions are asked or thought by almost all of us at one time or another: “Where did I come from?”, “Why am I here?” and “Where am I going?”. Because the concept of salvation is central to many religious beliefs, *‘The Salvation Encyclopaedia’* seeks to understand this last question from the standpoint of various faith communities and systems of belief.

For the purposes of this treatise, salvation is the concept that God or another Higher Power “saves” humanity from spiritual death or eternal damnation by providing for them an eternal life (or some form of afterlife).

Different faith communities have diverse views on salvation, ranging from exclusive paths through specific beliefs or actions, to

inclusive perspectives that recognize the potential for salvation in various ways. Some faiths, like Christianity, Islam, and certain strands of Judaism, emphasize belief in a particular God or divine figure and adherence to specific teachings as essential for salvation. Other faiths, like Hinduism and Buddhism, focus on spiritual liberation through practices, actions, or knowledge to break free from the cycle of rebirth (reincarnation).

Most Eastern religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Sikhism do not believe in salvation in the sense understood by most Westerners. They do not focus on Heaven or Hell as the end of life, but on knowledge.

Your author believes that no singular faith community has a monopoly on God and through the Holy Spirit the saving gift and grace of Christ is manifested in other religions beyond the visible confines of any Church or faith community.

Adherents to other faiths are our enemies

but rather fellow travellers. Thankfully, God is the Judge.

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A

Agnostics

Technically, an agnostic (a = without, gnosis = knowledge) is someone who doesn't believe that it is possible to know for sure that God or god exists while an atheist (qv) is someone who doesn't believe in any God, gods or god (a = without, theos = god).

Agnosticism was coined in 1869 by English biologist and anthropologist Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895) to describe his own beliefs. He wrote, “When I reached intellectual maturity and began to ask myself whether I was an atheist, a theist, or a pantheist…I found that the more I learned and reflected, the less ready was the answer. They [believers] were quite sure they had attained a certain *‘gnosis,’* (knowledge) had, more or less successfully, solved the problem of existence; while I was

quite sure I had not, and had a pretty strong conviction that the problem was insoluble."

Being unsure if they believe in a God, agnostics, like atheists, sense no need for salvation and hence have no pathway to salvation.

Agnostic Sandra Shulman (1944 -) wrote, "You're born, start running as fast as you can, and when you stop, you're dead." *('The Daughters of Asteroth', Paperback Library, New York, 1968, p32)*

Amish

See also Mennonites and Armenianism

Both Amish and Mennonites share a common Anabaptist heritage and core beliefs.

The Amish were founded in Switzerland in the 1500s after secession from the Zurich state church; the followers of Jacob Ammann broke from the other Mennonites in Switzerland and Alsace in 1693

Amish groups tend to view salvation as a gift from God, requiring obedience to Christ and a distinct way of life.

Amish often emphasize the importance of living a life that reflects their faith and obedience to Christ, viewing their way of life as an act of obedience.

While Mennonites also believe in following Christ's example, they generally don't emphasize salvation through works as much as the Amish.

Amish hesitate to claim assurance of salvation before God's final judgment, considering it presumptuous.

They have a strict adherence to the Ordnung, which is a set of rules that governs every aspect of Amish life, including dress, technology use, and social customs.

Amish often emphasize the importance of living a life that reflects their faith and obedience to Christ, viewing their way of life as an act of obedience.

Anglican

See Church of England

Antinomianism

An antinomian (Latin *anti-* + Greek *nomos* law) is one who denies the universality of moral laws; specifically an adherent of the view that those whose salvation is preordained are freed from all moral restraints

Antinomianism holds to theological doctrine that by faith and God's grace a Christian is freed from all laws (including the moral standards of the culture).

In summary, Antinomianism teaches that one need not persevere in faith to be saved, true believers can lose their faith, those who lose their faith are saved because they once believed and the believer who loses his faith is saved.

Armenianism

Reformers such as Martin Luther (1483-1546), Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560) and John Calvin (1509-1564) had perspectives on salvation that were for the most part followed by Jacobus Arminius (Armenianism) and John Wesley (Methodism) and others.

Jakob Harmensen (name Latinised to Jacobus Arminius or Jacob Ammann, 1560–1609) was a Dutch Protestant priest who founded Arminianism, a school of Christian theology opposed to John Calvin's doctrine of predestination, published in the ‘Remonstrance of 1610’, which was condemned by the Synod of Dort (an assembly of the Dutch Reformed Church) in 1619. Arminius’ views were developed by Simon Episcopius (1583–1643).

Armenians believe that one must persevere in faith to be saved, true believers can lose their faith, those dying without faith in Christ are condemned and the believer who loses his faith

is damned.

Assemblies of God

See Pentecostalism

At the time of publication, the ‘Assemblies of God’ are the largest of all Pentecostal congregations.

Atheism.

Unlike the uncertainty of knowing (by agnostics), most atheists believe there is no god and no heaven, in other words, no afterlife at all. Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky reminded us in *‘The Brothers Kararamazov’* that "if God does not exist, everything is permissible." Without God there is no such thing as sin and therefore no need for salvation or saviour.

Atheists believe that mankind is the highest form of life, and there is no God, heaven or

salvation beyond the material world. The goal is to make the short existence one has here as pleasant as possible using whatever philosophy or system that achieves this optimum state. Upon death, people simply cease to exist. Others attempt to define the afterlife using quantum mechanics and other scientific methods.

Richard Dawkins (1941-) in *'The God Delusion'* wrote, "The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: Jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty, ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevent bully."

Graham Storr in the *New Scientist* magazine describes his reader as, "A whim of several billion cells [destined] to be you for a while."

CS Lewis wrote, "I was . . . living, like so

many atheists or antitheists, in a whirl of contradictions. I maintained that God did not exist. I was also very angry with God for not existing. I was equally angry with him for creating a world.

Karl Rahner wrote that, tragically, “The number one cause of atheism is Christians who proclaim God with their mouths and deny him with their life-styles.”

A. W. Tozer (1897-1963) confirmed this when he wrote, “To many Christians, Christ is little more than an idea, or at best an ideal. He is not a fact. Millions of professed believers talk as if He were real and act as if He were not. Our actual position is always to be discovered by the way we act, not by the way we talk.”

There are various school of thought within atheism:

Dogmatic atheism asserts that there is no God.

Sceptical atheism maintains that the finite human mind is so constituted as to be incapable

of discovering that there is or is not a God.

Critical atheism holds that the evidence for theism is inadequate. This is akin to philosophical atheism, which fails to find evidence of a God manifest in the universe.

Speculative atheism comprises the beliefs of those who, like the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), find it impossible to demonstrate the existence of God (which the author of this book finds ironical as the name Immanuel means, *'God with us'*).

Azalism

See also Babism

Azalism is an off-shoot of Babism (qv) which split into Azalism and Bahá'ísm (qv) in the 1860s

Azalism teaches that man was neither born with a sinful nature nor needs saving from evil.

Therefore Azalism has no formal doctrine regarding salvation which is deemed unnecessary.

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B

Babism

See also Bahá'í Faith

Babism was a 19th-century messianic movement that originated in Iran, founded by Sayyid Ali Muhammad, who called himself the Báb. It emerged as a post-Islamic religion, claiming to be a new revelation of the Manifestations of God.

The Báb, a merchant-turned-prophet, believed there was one God who manifested His will through various prophets, also known as Manifestations of God.

Bábism faced severe persecution by the Iranian government, leading to the execution of the Báb and the suppression of the movement. Babism's legacy is visible in the Baha'i Faith (qv)

Bahá'ísm

Bahá'í was founded by Mirza Husayn 'Ali Nuri, who took the name Baha'u'llah (Glory of God) while in exile in Baghdad. His coming had been foretold by Mirza Ali Mohammed, known as al-Bab, who founded Babism in 1844, a sect from which the Baha'i faith grew.

Bahá'í, like many other religions, doesn't teach that man was born with a sinful nature or that man needs saving from evil. Man simply needs saving from his erroneous beliefs of how the world works and how he is to interact with the world. God sent messengers to explain to people how to come to this knowledge: Abraham, Krishna, Zoroaster, Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, and Baha'u'llah. These prophets progressively revealed the nature of god to the world. Bahá'u'lláh describes Jesus Christ, Moses, Abraham, Muhammad, Zoroaster, the Bab, and Himself as Manifestations of God.

Upon death, a person's soul continues its spiritual journey, perhaps through the states known as heaven and hell, until it comes to a final resting point, united with god.

Bahá'u'lláh makes it clear that acceptance of the Manifestation of God – two thousand years ago (Jesus), and today (Bahá'u'lláh Himself), is crucial for one's spiritual progress, and takes complete precedence over one's actions.

Bahá'u'lláh goes on to say that obedience to the teachings, especially the laws, of the Manifestation is also required.

Bahá'u'lláh defines creation and humanity in considerable detail. He says that on "every created thing He [God] has shed the light of one of His names". In other words, everything reflects an attribute of God; thus Baháu'lláh endorses a major insight of nature mysticism.

Bahá'u'lláh adds that on the human soul, however, God "has focused the radiance of all His names and attributes, and made it a mirror of His own Self". Thus the human soul contains

all the attributes of God in potential form (Kitáb-i-Íqán 101), and in this sense we are all linked to, and expressions of, God (though we are separate from the inmost essence of God).

Bahá'ís would not claim that only Jesus offered salvation to humanity; all the Manifestations convey salvation, through their words and through their sacrifice. In this sense all Manifestations could be described as 'saviours'.

The central tenets of the Bahá'í faith are the oneness of God, the oneness of humanity, and the common foundation of all religion. The people of Bahá'í also believe in the equality of men and women, universal education, world peace, and the creation of a federal system of world government.

Baptists

The Baptist Church emerged from an English Congregational background in 1609

under the leadership of John Smyth and in the United States of America by Roger Williams in Rhode Island in 1638. Although Baptists originated among English Dissenters who took refuge in the Netherlands in the early 17th century, the tenets of faith spread globally by emigration and missionary fervour.

The Baptist New Life Mission states, “One of the most common fallacies that today’s Christians believe in is that they think they can be saved by merely confessing Jesus to be their Saviour because the Lord is love. Baptism does not nullify the cross, but is actually the essential part of the Lord’s gospel that completes and fulfils the meaning of the Cross. It also teaches us that we cannot have redemption unless there is baptism.”

Baptists believe that, in new birth, God does three impossible things: the first is to make a man's past as though it had never been; the second, to make a man all over again; and the third, to make a man as certain of God as God

is of himself.

It is impossible for us to be the children of God naturally, to love our enemies, to forgive, to be holy, to be pure, and it is certainly impossible to us to follow God naturally; consequently the fundamental fact to recognize is that we must be born again.

Oswald Chambers (1874-1917) wrote, "Salvation means the incoming into human nature of the great characteristics that belong to God."

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892) wrote, "It is not your hold of Christ that saves you, but his hold of you!"

Biblical Christianity

Biblical Christianity is the only religion that teaches man can do nothing to earn or pay his way into Heaven. Man, a slave to the sin nature he was born with, must completely rely on the grace of God in applying Jesus Christ's

sacrifice to himself. People are forgiven of sin and saved by faith in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Buddhism

Buddhism started in Southern Nepal. Prince Siddhartha, who would later be known as the Buddha, meaning "the enlightened one." Siddhartha (Buddha) was born during the 6th Century in a small kingdom in Southern Nepal.

Buddhism began when Siddhartha realized that there was suffering and death in the world. He did not know of this before because his father kept him from seeing it. The only things he saw were beauty and the walls of his kingdom.

The prince was troubled by the sights of old age, dying, and suffering and decided to search for the answer to these problems.

Later he believed that he had found the key to enlightenment and asked his disciples to

spread it. This philosophy became the religion, Buddhism.

One of the unique aspects of Buddhism is that Buddhists do not recognize any Saviour. According to Buddhist teachings, the only way by which one can break the cycle of reincarnation and reach the Enlightened state of Nirvana is through one's own efforts.

Buddhism began as a way to address the suffering that exists in the world, and it was not overly-focused on ultimate salvation, although there is a clear doctrine of salvation in the Buddha's teachings: Salvation in early Buddhism was 'Nirvana', the extinguishing of the karma that constitutes the self. Nirvana is not a place or a state, but the end of rebirth.

Buddhism also believes that to reach heaven, or "*Nirvana*," is to be rejoined in spirit with god. Nirvana is a transcendental, blissful spiritual state, and attaining it requires following the so-called Eightfold Path.

This includes understanding the universe

and acting, speaking, and living in the right manner and with the right intentions. Mastering these and the other of the eight paths will return a worshiper's spirit to god.

The last words of the Buddha, as he was dying, are given as, "And now, O priests, I take my leave of you; all the constituents of being are transitory; work out your salvation with diligence."

Budda wrote (in the Dhammapada), "Let a person be a light to himself and learn wisdom. When he is free from delusion, he will go beyond birth and death. No one whose thoughts are only of this world can be a follower of the awakened. All things in this world are changing, but enlightenment remains forever."

The Buddha showed each disciple how to rely for salvation upon himself, on his own powers, focused upon redemption by spiritual self-discipline. When it comes to the issue of salvation, the gods cannot help because they are beings subjected to suffering and the karmic

system of ‘samsara’, the endless cycle of rebirth.

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C

Calvinism

A doctrine espoused by French-born Swiss Protestant church reformer John Calvin (1509–1564 also spelt *Cauvin* or *Chauvin*) and later adopted in Scotland, parts of Switzerland, and the Netherlands; by the Puritans in England and New England, USA; and by the subsequent Congregational and Presbyterian churches..

Its central doctrine is predestination, under which certain souls (the elect) are predestined by God through the sacrifice of Jesus to salvation, and the rest to damnation.

Salvation is accomplished by God's power. The Father chooses certain people whom Jesus died for and the Holy Spirit makes Christ's death effective for them by bringing the elect to faith and repentance, thereby causing them to willingly obey the gospel.

The entire process (election, redemption, regeneration) is the work of God and is by grace alone. Thus God, not man, determines who will be saved. John Calvin (1509-1564) said, “When God elects us, it is not because we are handsome.”

This was further clarified by Elnathan Parr (1577–1622 or 1632) who wrote, “This doctrine affords comfort: thy unworthiness may dismay thee, but remember that thy election depends not upon thy worthiness but upon the will of God.”

Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), in acknowledging that this doctrine neglects free choice, put it well when he wrote, “The elect are whosoever will; the non-elect are whosoever won't.”

Dwight Lyman Moody (1837-1899) observed, “Many men fold their arms and say, ‘If I am one of the elect I shall be saved, and if I am not, I won't. No use bothering about it.’ I have an idea that the Lord Jesus saw how men

were going to stumble over this doctrine of election, so after He had been thirty or forty years in heaven. He came down and spoke [via an angel] to John. One Lord's day in Patmos He said to him: ‘Write these things to the churches.’ John kept on writing. His pen flew very fast. And then the Lord, when it was nearly finished, said: ‘John, before you close the book, put in one more invitation. 'The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.’”

Catholicism

See Roman Catholicism

Christadelphian

The Christadelphian movement originated

with John Thomas (1805-1871), a British doctor who emigrated to the United States in 1832 and founded the movement in 1848.

The movement's name, "Christa-delphians," comes from the Greek phrase *"Christou adelphoi,"* meaning "brothers in Christ," and was adopted in 1864, partly due to their opposition to war during the American Civil War.

Salvation is not automatic but requires a conscious decision to believe in Jesus Christ and follow his teachings. There will be a judgment at the second coming, where those who have lived according to God's will, will be resurrected and participate in the future kingdom of God on earth, while those who have rejected God will face a different destiny.

Members of the Christadelphian faith believe that Jesus was human, not divine, although he was the son of God. They do not believe in Hell or Satan. Everyone who dies, according to Christadelphian theology, goes

into an unconscious state from which only believers will be resurrected during the Second Coming of Jesus.

Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA)

Christian and Missionary Alliance teachs that salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men; and those who repent and believe in Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, justified, sanctified, receive the gift of eternal life and become the children of God.

C&MA beliefs include God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit., The Lord Jesus Christ who saves us, sanctifies us, heals us and is coming again, the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures as originally given, the vicarious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ and the

eternal salvation of all who believe in Him with the eternal punishment of all who reject Him.

Church of Christ

Organized by American Presbyterians in Kentucky in 1804 and in Pennsylvania in 1809. Members believe in the New Testament, and they follow what is written in the Bible without elaboration. Rites are simple. Baptism is of adults.

Salvation concepts are similar to Presbyterians (See Calvanism).

Church of England

A faith community which was dissociated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534 under King Henry VIII (1491–1547) at a time when churches became the intercessor between God and the Christian. The ordinances of baptism, confirmation, penance, communion, ordination,

marriage… and last rites were essential in order to achieve salvation as they were considered outward signs of God's favour and blessing.

John Dyer (1699-1757) wrote, "A person may go to heaven without health, without riches, without honours, without learning, without friends; but he can never go there without Christ."

C. S. Lewis (1898-1963) wrote, 'I would pay any price to be able to say truthfully, "All will be saved." But my reason retorts, "Without their will, or with it?" If I say, "Without their will," I at once perceive a contradiction; how can the supreme voluntary act of self-surrender be involuntary? If I say, "With their will," my reason replies, "How if they will not give in?"'

The Church of England is part of the Anglican community, which is represented in the United States mainly by the Episcopal Church.

The Apostles' Creed, a statement of faith used in the Anglican, Roman Catholic and

many Protestant churches. It is not officially recognized in the Eastern Orthodox churches:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic [universal] Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

See Mormons

Church of Scotland.

The Church of Scotland (CoS; Scots: The Kirk o Scotland; Scottish Gaelic: Eaglais na h-Alba) was principally shaped by John Knox (c1514-1572) in the Reformation of 1560 when it split from the Catholic Church and established itself as a church in the Reformed tradition. Their salvation theology follows the Presbyterian convention (qv).

Confucianism

Confucianism is a body of beliefs and

practices based on the Chinese classics and supported by the authority of the philosopher Confucius (C. 551-479 B.C.). The origin of things is seen in the union of yin and yang, the passive and active principles. Human relationships follow the patriarchal pattern. For more than 2,000 years Chinese political government, social organization, and individual conduct was shaped by Confucian principles. In 1912, Confucian philosophy, as a basis for government, was dropped by the state.

The writings on which Confucianism is based include the ideas of a group of traditional books edited by Confucius, as well as his own works, such as 'the Analects', and those of some of his pupils. The 'I Ching' is included among the Confucianist texts.

Confucianism concentrates on appropriate behaviour in life, not on a future heaven. There is no formal worship of a Deity and the afterlife is believed to be unknowable, so all effort should be concentrated on this life to make it

the best it can be, to honour ancestors, and to respect elders.

When people conform to the right way of living they will create a society that works well - a social paradise.

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D

Deists (freethinkers)

Deism a type of monotheism which believes that a single god exists, who is personal in nature, but this god is presently not active in the created universe and the affairs of humanity, hence salvation is not necessary. The term is commonly applied to those thinkers in the 17th and 18th century who held that the course of nature sufficiently demonstrates the existence of a god. But for them formal religion was superluous, and they did not believe in the claim of supernatural revelation. Their tenets stemed from the rationalism of the period, and thoug the term is not now generally used, the tone of their belief persists. The term is almost synonymous. Voltaire and Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington were deists.

Thomas Jefferson wrote, “The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time.” In the 18th century, the US Congress issued a special edition of Thomas Jefferson's Bible. It was a simple copy of the accepted Bible with all references to the supernatural eliminated. Jefferson, in selecting, had confined himself solely to the moral teachings of Jesus. The closing words of Jefferson's Bible are: "There laid they Jesus and rolled a great stone at the mouth of the sepulchre and departed."

E

Eastern Orthodoxy

Eastern Orthodoxy is a Christian-Judeo derivative that reinterprets key Scripture verses in such a way that works become essential to reach heaven. Orthodoxy teaches that faith in Jesus is necessary for salvation but is only a part of the salvation process.

If that process (called theosis) is not performed appropriately, a worshiper can lose his or her salvation. After death, the devout live in an intermediate state where this theosis can be completed. Those who have belief but did not accomplish sufficient progress in theosis are sent to a temporary so-called 'direful condition' and will go to hell unless the devout on earth pray and complete acts of mercy on their behalf. After final judgment, the saved are sent to heaven and the others to hell. Heaven and

hell are not locations, but reactions to being in the presence of God, as there is nowhere that He is not present.

Everyone will experience the presence of God for eternity. Whether that experience is joyful or painful depends on the condition of one's heart. For Eastern Orthodox Christ-followers, life after death will be the wonderful enjoyment of God's presence. For the faithless and unbelieving, life after death will consist of the supreme torture of His presence.

They reject doctrine developed by the Western churches. Doctrine was established by seven ecumenical councils held between 325 and 787 and amended by other councils in the late Byzantine period. Relations between the Orthodox churches and Roman Catholicism have improved since the Second Vatican Council (1962.65).

Episcopalian

See Church of England

F, G, H

Hinduism

One of the world's oldest major religions, Hinduism, today has roughly around eight-hundred million followers. Hinduism is renowned for its deeply philosophical teachings that based upon the idea of reincarnation. Those who accept reincarnation believe that a person's soul after death is reborn into another body.

This rebirth may transform a soul into a lower form of life like an animal, nevertheless the life cycle continues - birth, life, death, and rebirth. In a sense, there is no death and life goes on forever. This belief is traditional for the Buddhists, Taoists, and followers of other religions.

An excerpt from ‘The Upanishads’, translated by Eknath Easwaran reads, “The all-knowing Self was never born, / Nor will it die.

Beyond cause and effect, / This Self is eternal and immutable. / When the body dies, the Self does not die. / If the slayer believes that he can slay / Or the slain believes that he can be slain, / Neither knows the truth. The eternal Self / Slays not, nor is ever slain."

The origins of Hinduism can be traced to the Vedas, or Upanishads, which were holy texts that were brought to India by Aryan invaders after 1200BC.

Hinduism is similar to Buddhism in some ways. According to Hindi teachings, all living beings on earth go through many phases of reincarnation in an attempt to reach the state of moksha, or spiritual self-realization.

In the practice of Hinduism, the idea of salvation or the way to salvation is by eliminating evil in your life until you are pure enough to merge with Brahma. In Hinduism, Deity does not have an individual personality, it is a force. Hindus continue in this effort at self-improvement through a series of reincarnated

lives until they reach the final stage of merging with Brahma.

The prohibition against killing cows for food stems from the belief that cows are the final reincarnated form one attains before merging with Brahma.

Salvation (or *moksha*) is reached when the worshiper is freed from the cycle of reincarnation and his spirit becomes one with god. One becomes free by ridding oneself of bad karma—the effect of evil action or evil intent.

This can be done in three different ways: through selfless devotion to and service of a particular god, through understanding the nature of the universe, or by mastering the actions needed to fully appease the gods.

In Hinduism, with over a million different gods, there are differences of opinion regarding the nature of salvation. For example, the Advaita school teaches salvation occurs when one strips away the false self and makes the

soul indistinguishable from that of god. The dualist insists that one's soul always retains its own identity even as it is joined with god.

Humanism

According to Rev. Dr. Marlin Lavanhar, "One Humanistic way to understand salvation is by looking at the etymology of the word. Even though most Humanist do not typically use words such as salvation, the word itself can be interpreted in a non-theistic way. The Latin roots of the word salvation are *health and whole*."

In other words, one could argue that actions that lead to health and wholeness are actions that help to 'save' us. Acts of compassion, understanding, generosity and love all help to create a healthy and whole person and world. Conversely, those things that lead away from health and create brokenness, such as racism, violence and abuse of power, lead us away from

wholeness and consequently away from salvation.

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I

Islam

Islam teaches that salvation is achieved through believing in one God (Allah) and following the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad.

Founded in the seventh century by the prophet Muhammad, Islam is one of the world's largest and most historic religions. The emigration of Muhammad from his home city of Mecca to Medina is regarded as the real beginning of Islam. The period before that is called "the time of ignorance."

When Muhammad first began preaching in the city of Mecca in 613AD, he was met with stiff opposition from the powerful elite of Arabian society at that time.

Muhammad's main preaching taught the importance of sympathizing with the poor and

most needy of society as well as condemning the worship of idols. It is thus, understandable that the wealthiest of society resented Muhammad and the popularity that he was gaining.

Faced with increasingly harsh opposition, Muhammad was forced to flee Mecca and escape to Medina in 622. The Hegira, as this escape has come to be known by Muslims, is a benchmark in Islamic history and is generally re arded as the beginning o

the Islamic religion. By 629, Muhammad and his disciples had returned to Mecca an succeeded in regaining control of the regio

. Islam is a take-off on the Christian/Jud o God, but salvation is work-based and not by gra e. Muslims believe salv

ion com

to those who obey Allah to the poin that their good deeds outweigh their bad. At t

e core of Islamic teaching is the Koran.

The Koran is a collection of the revelations that Muhammad received from an angel of God, or Allah, in his childhood. Islam teaches that salvation is accomplished by practicing and repeating the Five Pillars within the Koran: belief in one God, Allah and Muhammad as the most perfect prophet, required prayer five times during the day, abstaining from food and drink from sunrise to sunset during the month of Ramadan, giving alms to the poor, and going on a pilgrimage to the city of Mecca unless one is unable to do so because of a illness or financial hardship.

In order to please Allah, Muslims perform a cleansing ritual ablution or washing (‘wudu’ in Arabic) to prepare for prayer. They may perform it up to five times a day as needed, based on cleanliness, for their five daily prayers.

To start, they wash their hands and rinse their mouth and the openings of their nostrils.

They wash their face and their arms up to their elbows. They wipe their forehead with their right hand over their hair to the back of their neck and clean both ears with their forefingers. To finish, they wash their feet, starting with the right. Each body part is washed three times.

It is required that the water be moving, meaning they cannot dip their hands or feet in still water to complete the ritual.

Muslims hope that repeating what Muhammad did and said will be enough to get to heaven, but they also recite extra prayers, fast, go on pilgrimages, and perform good works in hope of tipping the scales in their favour. A Muslim is never really sure about his or her salvation.

Muslims can do all the right things and still not be saved because Allah considers that they are deficient in some way or another that only

he knows. Martyrdom in service to Allah is the only work guaranteed to send a worshipper to paradise.

J

Jainism

Jainanism was supposedly founded by Rishabhdeva (whom adherents claim lived a million years ago). More recently their genesis has been attributed to Mahavira, the 24th. *Tirthankaras* (Supreme Preacher).

Beginning as an offshoot of Hinduism, Jainism (or Jain Dharma) broke away from traditional Hindi teachings, believing that the sacrifice of animals was wrong because even animals were sacred living things.

As a result of this belief, followers of Jainism take all steps necessary in the course of their daily life to avoid causing injury to any animals.

As one might expect, all Jains are strict vegetarians and do not eat any organisms that may have any more than one sense. As a result, Jains do not consume the roots of many plants because it is not uncommon for many other organisms to dwell within the root systems of plants.

In addition to their strict dietary regulations, the Jain code of conduct is composed of five vows which all Jains adhere to: *Ahimsa* (non-injury), *Satya* (truthfulness), *Asteya* (non-stealing), *Aparigraha* (non-possessiveness), and *Brahmacharya* (chastity).

Also, Jainism teaches that the world has no beginning and will have no end. According to Jains, the universe is composed of seven spheres: the supreme abode, the upper world, the middle world, the nether world, the Nigoda (or lowest form), universe space, and space beyond.

All the liberated souls, according to Jains, live in the supreme abode. Jains also believe

that each person has karma (consequences of the aggregate total of the rights and wrongs that one has committed during his or her lifetime).

Jainian salvation theology: Jains do not believe that there is one supreme God that was responsible for creation; however, in much the same way as other major religions, Jains believe that there is an after-life, and that the way to reach the after-life is through a deep care and devotion to all living beings. One must hold the right belief, have the right knowledge, and act in the right manner. Only then can the soul be cleansed of bad karma.

But in Jainism, because there is neither creator nor a higher god to reach for or to lend aid, salvation is seen as man being the master of his own destiny, liberated and perfect, filled with infinite perception, knowledge, bliss, and power.

Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses were formed in the United States of America in 1872 under the initiation of Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916).

The Jehovah's Witnesses' teachings through the Watchtower Society lead many to categorise the Jehovah's Witnesses as a cult of Christianity that denies the personality of the Holy Spirit and teaches that Christ is a created being.

Similar to Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses teach different levels of heaven. The few anointed are 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses who receive salvation by the blood of Christ and will rule with Him in paradise.

They (alone) are the 'Bride of Christ'. For all others, Jesus' sacrifice only freed them from Adam's curse of original sin, and 'faith' is merely the opportunity to earn their way to heaven. The faithful must learn about Kingdom history, keep the laws of Jehovah, and be loyal to 'God's government' which consists of the 144,000 leaders, 9,000 of whom are currently still on the earth.

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Adherents must also spread the news about the Kingdom through door-to-door proselytising and other means. Upon death, the faithful will be resurrected during the millennial kingdom where they must continue a devout life. The righteous will then live for eternity under the rule of the 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses.

Judaism

Jews believe that, as individuals and as a nation, as God's chosen people, they can be reconciled to God. Through sin (individually or collectively) they can lose their salvation, but they can also earn it back through repentance, good deeds, and a life of devotion.

This is reflected in statement 11 in the Rambam's Thirteen Principles of Jewish Faith by Maimonides (1137–1204): "11. I believe with perfect faith that God rewards those who keep His commandments, and punishes those

who transgress Him."

However, Albert Einstein, himself a Jew, said he had a great affinity with Jewish people but said in a letter written on January 3, 1954 to the philosopher Eric Gutkind, they "have no different quality for me than all other people… The word God is for me nothing more than the expression and product of human weaknesses, the Bible a collection of honourable, but still primitive legends, which are nevertheless pretty childish. … No interpretation no matter how subtle can (for me) change this."

We know that Judaism began in Israel and has spread all over the world. These people were chosen by God, and thus by virtue of the fact that you belong to this nation, you are saved. The idea is that if you are a faithful Jew and part of the nation, you are then subject to the reward.

Judaism is divided into three main groups who vary in their interpretation of those parts of the Torah that deal with personal, communal,

international, and religious activities: the Orthodox community, which views the Torah as derived from God, and therefore absolutely binding; the Reform movement, which follows primarily its ethical content; and the Conservative Jews, who follow most of the observances set out in the Torah but allow for change in the face of modern life. A fourth group, Reconstructionist Jews, rejects the concept of the Jews as God's chosen people, yet maintains rituals as part of the Judaic cultural heritage. Different groups within Judaism who have different ideas. Some don't believe that there is any afterlife and some do. However, the

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idea about salvation is always the same from group to group: you have to be part of the nation in order to have salvation.

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Kirk o Scotland

See Church of Scotland.

L

Latter-day Saints

See Mormons

Lutheranism

Martin Luther (1483-1546), as a Roman Catholic priest, found no forgiveness in acts of penitence or in confession, and began to study the Bible and to lecture on the Psalms (1513–15), Romans (1515–16), Galatians (1516–17), and Hebrews (1517–18). The most generally accepted statement of Lutheranism is that of the Confession of Augsburg in 1530 but Luther's Shorter Catechism also carries great weight.

Lutheranism is the principal form of

Protestantism in Germany, and is the national faith of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland. The organization appears to be episcopal in Germany and Sweden, and synodal in the Netherlands and the United States of America.

It seemed clear to Luther from Romans that righteousness was not attainable by good works or any endeavour, but was the gift of God. Hence, salvation comes through faith alone.

The Nicene Creed, also called the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed, is part of the profession of faith required of those undertaking important functions within the Lutheran Churches (as well as Orthodox and Catholic).

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true

God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father.

Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried. The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead.His kingdom will never end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified. He spoke through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic [universal] and apostolic church. We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and to

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life in the world to come. .

M

Medieval Christianity

Throughout the middle ages Christianity emphasized the idea of original sin, in which all human beings are born sinners and must go through the appropriate steps to reconcile themselves to God, such as baptism, confession of sin, and prayer.

From the third century until the eleventh century, the concept of Jesus' death as a ransom paid to the devil became popular in understanding salvation.

Over time, the medieval church specifically linked salvation with the sacraments. Baptism was the first act of salvation, removing the guilt of original sin. The sacrament of penance was the second act of salvation, which involved the sinner confessing to a priest and performing

satisfactory acts of penance equal to the gravity of the sin. If the sinner died without fulfilling penance for their sins, they would be punished in purgatory.

Mennonites

(See also Amish)

Both Mennonites and Amish share a common Anabaptist heritage and core beliefs.

Mennonites believe in salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and they emphasize the importance of following Christ's example and maintain a right relationship with him through actions. They believe individuals can lose their salvation by apostasy or living a life that separates them from Christ. While Mennonites believe in following Christ's example, they generally don't emphasize salvation through works.

The Bible is the sole rule of faith and their beliefs are outlined in the Dordrecht Confession

of Faith (1632)

Methodism (Wesleyan)

Methodist theology is elusive. When John Wesley attempted to describe 'The Character of a Methodist' (1742), he began by telling the reader what a Methodist is not. The distinguishing marks of the Methodist, he observed, are not a peculiar set of opinions, notions, doctrines, actions, or customs. Methodists are those, he claims, who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto them: those who love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind, and with all their strength. God is the joy of their heart and the desire of their soul. They walk as Christ walked.

Salvation is accomplished through the combined efforts of God (who takes the

initiative) and man (who must respond). Man's response is the determining factor. God has provided salvation for everyone, but His provision becomes effective only for those who, of their own free will, choose to cooperate with Him and accept His offer of grace. At the crucial point, man's will plays a decisive role; thus man, not God, determines who will be recipients of the gift of salvation.

Methodists (Wesleyans) believe in one God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Saviour of all persons who put their faith in Him alone for eternal life. They believe those who receive new life in Christ are called to be holy in character and conduct, and can only live this way by being filled with the Lord's Spirit.

They believe in the Bible and seek to establish our faith and actions on its teachings. They believe God wants people everywhere to know Him and that the purpose of the church is to tell the world about Christ through its worship, witness, and loving deeds.

In summary, one must persevere in faith to be saved, true believers cannot lose their faith, since it is God's gift, those dying without faith in Christ are condemned, those who lose their faith never had it to begin with and God will preserve all true believers and they will be saved.

Mormons

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was founded at Fayette in New York in 1830 by Joseph Smith. According to Smith, Mormon was an ancient prophet in North America whose Book of Mormon, which Smith claimed was divinely revealed to him, is accepted by Mormons as part of the Christian scriptures.

Mormons believe their religion to be a derivative of Judeo/Christianity, but their non-biblical view of Christ and their reliance on extra-grace works belies this. They also have a

different view of heaven.

To reach the second heaven under "general salvation," one must accept Christ (either in this life or the next) and be baptised or be baptised by proxy through a living relative. To reach the highest heaven, one must believe in God and Jesus, repent of sins, be baptised in the church, be a member of the Latter-Day Saints Church, receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, obey the Mormon "Word of Wisdom" plus all of God's commandments according to the Latter-Day Saints Church interpretation, and complete certain temple rituals including marriage.

This "individual salvation" leads to the worshiper and his or her spouse becoming gods and giving birth to spirit children who return to Earth as the souls of the living.

Modern Mormon apocryphal writings: *The Book of Mormon* (1830) authored by Joseph Smith (USA); *The Unknown Life of Christ* (1984) authored by Nicolas Notovitch (Russia);

The Aquarian Gospel (1911) authored by Dr. Levi H. Dowling (USA); *The Crucifixion of Christ* (1851) authored by Essene Elder (Sweden); *The Report of Pilate* (1879) authored by Rev. W. D. Mahan (USA); *The Confession of Pontius Pilate* (1889) authored by Lebanese Bishop (England); *The Letter of Behan* (1910) authored by the Egyptian Priest Behan (Berlin); *The Twenty-ninth Chapter of Acts* (1871) author unknown (London); *The Letter from Heaven* (Date unknown) authored by Jesus?; *The Gospel of Josephus* (Date unknown) authored by Signor Luigi Moccia (Italy); T*he Book of Jasher* (1751) authored by Jacob Ilive (London); *The Description of Christ* (13th Century) authored by Publius Lentulus; *The Death Warrant of Jesus Christ* (1810) authored by Pontius Pilate? (USA); *The Long-lost Second Book of Acts* (1904) author unknown (USA); *Oahspe* (1882) authored by Dr. John B. Newbrough (USA); and *The Lost Books of the Bible* (1926) authored by Dr. Kenneth S.

Guthrie (USA)

Muslim

See Islam

N

New Age

The new age movement is an Americanisation of eastern thought and incorporates many concepts from Eastern religions including Buddhist teachings on the afterlife and reincarnation.

In the absence of sin, salvation is not necessary. The name *New Age* was proposed by Charles Thomson, the Latin expert who was involved in the design of the Great Seal of the United States, to signify "the beginning of the new American Era" as of the date of the Declaration of Independence.

The phrase *Novus Ordo Seclorum* (Latin for "New Order of the Ages") appears on the reverse of the Great Seal of the United States, first designed in 1782 and printed on the back of the American dollar bill since 1935.

The phrase also appears on the coat of arms of the Yale School of Management, Yale University's business school.

The phrase is often mistranslated as "*New World Order*," but the Latin for that phrase would be *Novus Ordo Mundi*. The phrase is taken from the fourth Eclogue of Virgil and Medieval Christians read Virgil's poem as a prophecy of the coming of Christ.

O

Orthodoxy

See Eastern Orthodoxy

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P

Pantheism

Pantheism (*pantheist = believer in many gods)* is the philosophical and religious belief that reality, the universe, and nature are identical to divinity or a supreme entity.

The physical universe is thus understood as an immanent deity, still expanding and creating, which has existed since the beginning of time.

A pantheist does not give up the concept of a deity. He considers the universe as a divine object, but he does not consider it in a personal form like most religions consider their deities.

Salvation is not necessary as it is believed that humans have never fallen therefore there is nothing to be saved from.

Pentecostalism

Pentecostal churches grew out of the "holiness movement" that developed among Methodists and Protestants in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Pentecostals believe in baptism in the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, faith healing, and the second coming of Jesus. Of the various Pentecostal churches, the Assemblies of God is the largest. A perfectionist attitude toward secular affairs is common. Services feature enthusiastic sermons and hymns, and Pentecostals practice adult baptism and communion. Salvation is by personal perfection.

Presbyterianism

See Calvanism

Presbyterians trace their heritage back to the sixteenth century Protestant reformers, John

Calvin (1509-1564), Huldrych (or Ulrich) Zwingli (1484-1531) and John Knox (c1514-1572).

Polytheism

Polytheism typically involves the belief in several gods of a particular national culture such as the religions of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. Each individual god represents a unique value, personifies some aspect of humanity, and/or maintains control over some facet of nature or society. Salvation relies on their appeasement.

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Q

Quakers

The Religious Society of Friends (or Quakers) was founded by George Fox in England in the seventeenth century, who preached a doctrine of Inner Light, and complained bitterly against organized churches.

For salvation, the Friends believe in reliance on the Inner Light, the voice of God's Holy Spirit experienced within each person.

Meetings are characterized by quiet meditation without ritual or sermon. Quakers are active in peace, education, and social welfare movements. They refuse to bear arms or take oaths.

Quakers believe salvation is achieved through a direct relationship with God in Christ, which is accessible to everyone. This relationship involves an "inward light" or direct

apprehension of God within each person, leading to spiritual transformation and a life lived according to God's will.

Salvation is not solely about escaping punishment but also about becoming a radically different person, whose life is shaped by the divine presence within.

Quakers emphasize living out their beliefs through actions and service rather than focusing on specific doctrines, as Christian qualities are more important to them.

R

Religious Society of Friends

See Quakers

Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

See Mormons

Founded by Joseph Smith Junior (1832–1914).

Roman Catholicism

Roman Catholics originally believed only

those in the Roman Catholic Church could be saved. Joining the church was a long process of indoctrination classes, rituals, and baptism. People who had already been baptised but were not members of the Roman Catholic Church faced different requirements and may even already be considered Christians. Baptism is 'normatively' required for salvation, but this can include 'baptism of blood' (i.e., martyrdom) or 'baptism of desire' (wanting to be baptised). The Catholic Church states that "while God can choose to save someone who is unable to believe in God, this is not a universal truth".

From the Catholic Catechism we can read that "Those who die for the faith, those who are catechumens, and all those who, without knowing of the Church but acting under the inspiration of grace, seek God sincerely and strive to fulfil his will, are saved even if they have not been baptised" Despite the changes through the years, baptism (or the desire for baptism) is still required for salvation.

According to Catholicism, upon death, the souls of those who rejected Christ are sent to hell. The souls of those who accepted Christ and performed sufficient acts and rituals to be purified of sin go to heaven.

Those who died in faith but did not complete the steps to be purified are sent to purgatory where they undergo a temporary, painful punishment (purging) until their souls are cleansed.

Purification by this torment may be lessened by suffering during life and the offerings (indulgences) and prayers of others on the sinner's behalf. Once purification is complete, the soul may go to heaven. Indulgences are the total or partial remission of temporal punishment for sins that remain to be expiated after penitence and confession have secured exemption from eternal punishment.

According to the Hutchinson Encyclopaedia, the doctrine of indulgence began as the commutation of church penances in exchange

for suitable works of charity or money gifts to the church, and became a great source of church revenue.

This trade in indulgences roused Martin Luther (1483-1546) to initiate the Reformation in 1517. The Council of Trent 1563 recommended moderate retention of indulgences, and they continue, notably in 'Holy Years'.

Thomas à Kempis (C.1380-1471), a German-Dutch Catholic and a member of the Modern Devotion, a spiritual movement during the late medieval period wrote, “At the day of judgment we shall not be asked what we have read but what we have done.”

The Athanasian Creed differs from the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed and the Apostles’ Creed in that it includes anathemas condemning those who disagree with its statements, as does the original Nicene Creed.

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic [universal]

faith. Which faith unless every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

And the catholic faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Essence. For there is one Person of the Father; another of the Son; and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal.

Such as the Father is; such is the Son; and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreated; the Son uncreated; and the Holy Ghost uncreated. The Father infinite; the Son infinite; and the Holy Ghost infinite. The Father eternal; the Son eternal; and the Holy Ghost eternal.

And yet they are not three eternals; but one eternal. As also there are not three uncreated; nor three infinites, but one uncreated; and one infinite.

So likewise the Father is Almighty; the Son

Almighty; and the Holy Ghost Almighty. And yet they are not three Almighties; but one Almighty. So the Father is God; the Son is God; and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods; but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord; the Son Lord; and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords; but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity; to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord;

So are we forbidden by the catholic religion; to say, There are three Gods, or three Lords. The Father is made of none; neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created; but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten; but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is before,

or after another; none is greater, or less than another.

But the whole three Persons are coeternal, and coequal. So that in all things, as aforesaid; the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved, let him thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation; that he also believe faithfully the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess; that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God, of the Substance [Essence] of the Father; begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the Substance [Essence] of his mother, born in the world.

Perfect God; and perfect Man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father as touching his Manhood. Who although he is God and Man; yet he is not two, but one Christ. One; not by

conversion of the Godhead into flesh; but by assumption of the Manhood into God. One altogether; not by confusion of Substance [Essence]; but by unity of Person.

For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man; so God and Man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation; descended into hell; rose again the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from whence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

At whose coming all men will rise again with their bodies; And shall give account for their own works. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire. This is the catholic faith; which except a man believe truly and firmly, he cannot be saved.

Rosicrucianism

Rosicrucianism is a movement begun in

1868 by RW Little that claims ties to an older *Society of the Rose and Cross* that was founded in Germany in 1413 by Christian Rosencreuz (1378-1484). Christian Rosenkreuz is a legendary, possibly allegorical, founder of the Rosicrucian Order. He is presented in three manifestos that were published early in the 17th century.

The Rosicrucian Brotherhood was established in Quakertown, Penn-sylvania, by Reuben Swinburne Clymer (1878-1966) in 1902. The Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crusis (AMORC) was founded in San Jose, California, in 1915 by H. Spencer Lewis (1883-1939).

Both sects could be classified as either fraternal or religious organizations, although they claim to empower members with cosmic forces by unveiling secret wisdom regarding the laws of nature.

At the time of publication, salvation was not specifically referenced in their sacred writings because Jesus Christ, in the theology of the

Rosicrucians, "was a spirit belonging to our human evolution, and so was Gautama Buddha", a theology which makes no allowance for the incarnation of the only God in the Person of the man from Nazareth nor his ability to save.

S

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army's eleven articles of faith:

1. I will be responsive to the Holy Spirit's work and obedient to His leading in my life, growing in grace through worship, prayer, service and the reading of the Bible. I will make the values of the Kingdom of God and not the values of the world the standard for my life.

2. I will uphold Christian integrity in every area of my life, allowing nothing in thought, word or deed that is unworthy, unclean, untrue, profane, dishonest or immoral.

3. I will maintain Christian ideals in all my relationships with others; my family and neighbours, my colleagues and fellow salvationists, those to whom and for whom I am responsible, and the wider community.

4. I will uphold the sanctity of marriage and of family life. I will be a faithful steward of my time and gifts, my money and possessions, my body, my mind and my spirit, knowing that I am accountable to God.

5. I will abstain from alcoholic drink, tobacco, the non-medical use of addictive drugs, gambling, pornography, the occult and all else that could enslave the body or spirit.

6. I will be faithful to the purposes for which God raised up The Salvation Army, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, endeavouring to win others to Him, and in His name caring for the needy and the disadvantaged.

7. I will be actively involved, as I am able, in the life, work, worship and witness of the corps, giving as large a proportion of my income as possible to support its ministries and the worldwide work of the Army.

8. I will be true to the principles and practices of The Salvation Army, loyal to its leaders, and I will show the spirit of

salvationism whether in times of popularity or persecution.

William Booth (1829-1912), Co-Founder of the Salvation Army wrote, “On one of my recent journeys, as I gazed from the coach window, I was led into a train of thought concerning the condition of the multitudes around me. They were living carelessly in the most open and shameless rebellion against God, without a thought for their eternal welfare.

As I looked out of the window, I seemed to see them all . . . millions of people all around me given up to their drink and their pleasure, their dancing and their music, their business and their anxieties, their politics and their troubles, ignorant - willfully ignorant in many cases - and in other instances knowing all about the truth and not caring at all. But all of them, the whole mass of them, sweeping on and up in their blasphemies and devilries to the Throne of God.

While my mind was thus engaged, I had a

vision. I saw a dark and stormy ocean. Over it the black clouds hung heavily; through them every now and then vivid lightning flashed and loud thunder rolled, while the winds moaned, and the waves rose and foamed, towered and broke, only to rise and foam, tower and break again.

In that ocean I thought I saw myriads of poor human beings plunging and floating, shouting and shrieking, cursing and struggling and drowning; and as they cursed and screamed they rose and shrieked again, and then some sank to rise no more. And I saw out of this dark angry ocean, a mighty rock that rose up with its summit towering high above the black clouds that overhung the stormy sea. And all around the base of this great rock I saw a vast platform.

Onto this platform, I saw with delight a number of the poor struggling, drowning wretches continually climbing out of the angry ocean. And I saw that a few of those who were already safe on the platform were helping the

poor creatures still in the angry waters to reach the place of safety.

On looking more closely I found a number of those who had been rescued, industriously working and scheming by ladders, ropes, boats and other means more effective, to deliver the poor strugglers out of the sea. Here and there were some who actually jumped into the water, regardless of the consequences in their passion to ‘rescue the perishing.’

And I hardly know which gladdened me the most - the sight of the poor drowning people climbing onto the rocks reaching a place of safety, or the devotion and self-sacrifice of those whose whole being was wrapped up in the effort for their deliverance.

As I looked on, I saw that the occupants of that platform were quite a mixed company. That is, they were divided into different ‘sets’ or classes, and they occupied themselves with different pleasures and employments. But only a very few of them seemed to make it their

business to get the people out of the sea. But what puzzled me most was the fact that though all of them had been rescued at one time or another from the ocean, nearly everyone seemed to have forgotten all about it.

Anyway, it seemed the memory of its darkness and danger no longer troubled them at all. And what seemed equally strange and perplexing to me was that these people did not even seem to have any care - that is any agonizing care - about the poor perishing ones who were struggling and drowning right before their very eyes . . . many of whom were their own husbands and wives, brothers and sisters and even their own children.

Now this astonishing unconcern could not have been the result of ignorance or lack of knowledge, because they lived right there in full sight of it all and even talked about it sometimes. Many even went regularly to hear lectures and sermons in which the awful state of these poor drowning creatures was described.

I have always said that the occupants of this platform were engaged in different pursuits and pastimes. Some of them were absorbed day and night in trading and business in order to make gain, storing up their savings in boxes, safes and the like.

Many spent their time in amusing themselves with growing flowers on the side of the rock, others in painting pieces of cloth or in playing music, or in dressing themselves up in different styles and walking about to be admired. Some occupied themselves chiefly in eating and drinking; others were taken up with arguing about the poor drowning creatures that had already been rescued.

But the thing to me that seemed the most amazing was that those on the platform to whom He called, who heard His voice and felt that they ought to obey it - at least they said they did - those who confessed to love Him much were in full sympathy with Him in the task He had undertaken - who worshipped Him

or who professed to do so - were so taken up with their trades and professions, their money saving and pleasures, their families and circles, their religions and arguments about it, and their preparation for going to the mainland, that they did not listen to the cry that came to them from this Wonderful Being who had Himself gone down into the sea.

Anyway, if they heard it they did not heed it. They did not care. And so the multitude went on right before them struggling and shrieking and drowning in the darkness. And then I saw something that seemed to me even more strange than anything that had gone on before in this strange vision.

I saw that some of these people on the platform to whom this Wonderful Being had called, wanting them to come and help Him in His difficult task of saving these perishing creatures, were always praying and crying out to Him to come to them!

Some wanted Him to come and stay with

them, and spend His time and strength in making them happier. Others wanted Him to come and take away various doubts and misgivings they had concerning the truth of some letters He had written them. Some wanted Him to come and make them feel more secure on the rock - so secure that they would be quite sure that they should never slip off again into the ocean.

Numbers of others wanted Him to make them feel quite certain that they would really get off the rock and onto the mainland someday; because as a matter of fact, it was well known that some had walked so carelessly as to lose their footing, and had fallen back again into the stormy waters.

So these people used to meet and get up as high on the rock as they could, and looking towards the mainland (where they thought the Great Being was) they would cry out, ‘Come to us! Come and help us!’

And all the while He was down (by His

Spirit) among the poor struggling, drowning creatures in the angry deep, with His arms around them trying to drag them out, and looking up - oh! so longingly but all in vain - to those on the rock, crying to them with His voice all hoarse from calling, ‘Come to Me! Come, and help Me!

And then I understood it all. It was plain enough. The sea was the ocean of life - the sea of real, actual human existence. That lightning was the gleaming of piercing truth coming from Jehovah’s Throne. That thunder was the distant echoing of the wrath of God. Those multitudes of people shrieking, struggling and agonizing in the stormy sea, was the thousands and thousands of poor harlots and harlot-makers, of drunkards and drunkard makers, of thieves, liars, blasphemers and ungodly people of every kindred, tongue and nation.

Oh what a black sea it was! And oh, what multitudes of rich and poor, ignorant and educated were there. They were all so unalike

in their outward circumstances and conditions, yet all alike in one thing - all sinners before God - all held by, and holding onto, some iniquity, fascinated by some idol, the slaves of some devilish lust, and ruled by the foul fiend from the bottomless pit!

'All alike in one thing?' No, all alike in two things - not only the same in their wickedness but, unless rescued, the same in their sinking, sinking . . . down, down, down . . . to the same terrible doom. That great sheltering rock represented Calvary, the place where Jesus had died for them. And the people on it were those who had been rescued.

The way they used their energies, gifts and time represented the occupations and amusements of those who professed to be saved from sin and hell - followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The handful of fierce, determined ones, who were risking their own lives in saving the perishing were true soldiers of the cross of Jesus.

That Mighty Being who was calling to them from the midst of the angry waters was the Son of God, ‘the same yesterday, today and forever’ who is still struggling and interceding to save the dying multitudes about us from this terrible doom of damnation, and whose voice can be heard above the music, machinery, and noise of life, calling on the rescued to come and help Him save the world.

My friends in Christ, you are rescued from the waters, you are on the rock. He is in the dark sea calling on you to come to Him and help Him. Will you go? Look for yourselves. The surging sea of life, crowded with perishing multitudes rolls up to the very spot on which you stand. Leaving the vision, I now come to speak of the fact - a fact that is as real as the Bible, as real as the Christ who hung upon the cross, as real as the judgment day will be, and as real as the heaven and hell that will follow it.

Look! Don’t be deceived by appearances - men and things are not what they seem. All who

are not on the rock are in the sea! Look at them from the standpoint of the great White Throne, and what a sight you have! Jesus Christ, the Son of God is, through His Spirit, in the midst of this dying multitude, struggling to save them. And He is calling on you to jump into the sea - to go right away to His side and help Him in the holy strife. Will you jump? That is, will you go to His feet and place yourself absolutely at His disposal?

A young Christian once came to me, and told me that for some time she had been giving the Lord her profession and prayers and money, but now she wanted to give Him her life. She wanted to go right into the fight. In other words, she wanted to go to His assistance in the sea.

As when a man from the shore, seeing another struggling in the water, takes off those outer garments that would hinder his efforts and leaps to the rescue, so will you who still linger on the bank, thinking and singing and praying about the poor perishing souls, lay aside your

shame, your pride, your cares about other people's opinions, your love of ease and all the selfish loves that have kept you back for so long, and rush to the rescue of this multitude of dying men and women.

Does the surging sea look dark and dangerous? Unquestionably it is so. There is no doubt that the leap for you, as for everyone who takes it, means difficulty and scorn and suffering. For you it may mean more than this. It may mean death. He who beckons you from the sea however, knows what it will mean - and knowing, He still calls to you and bids to you to come.

You must do it! You cannot hold back. You have enjoyed yourself in Christianity long enough. You have had pleasant feelings, pleasant songs, pleasant meetings, pleasant prospects. There has been much of human happiness, much clapping of hands and shouting of praises - very much of heaven on earth.

Now then, go to God and tell Him you are prepared as much as necessary to turn your back upon it all, and that you are willing to spend the rest of your days struggling in the midst of these perishing multitudes, whatever it may cost you. You must do it.

With the light that is now broken in upon your mind and the call that is now sounding in your ears, and the beckoning hands that are now before your eyes, you have no alternative. To go down among the perishing crowds is your duty. Your happiness from now on will consist in sharing their misery, your ease in sharing their pain, your crown in helping them to bear their cross, and your heaven in going into the very jaws of hell to rescue them."

Scientology

In 1954 American author Lafayette Ronald Hubbard (1911-1986), founded the Church of Scientology. Hubbard was a prolific writer of

pulp science fiction and fantasy novels in his early career, and in 1950 he authored Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health and established organizations to promote and practice Dianetics techniques.

Scientology teaches that technology can expand the mind and help solve problems.

Scientology is similar to Eastern religions in that salvation is achieved through knowledge of self and the universe. The ‘thetan’ (Scientology’s answer to the soul) travels through several different lifetimes, attempting to expel painful and traumatic images that cause a person to act fearfully and irrationally. Once a Scientologist is ‘cleared’ of these harmful images and becomes an ‘operating thetan’, he or she is able to control thought, life, matter, energy, space, and time.

Seventh Day Adventism

The Seventh Day Adventist church grew out of the teachings of William Miller (1782 - 1849) in the 1840s. Formally founded in North America in 1863. The Bible is the only creed (although they do have 27 creed-like fundamentals).

They emphasize the second coming of Jesus and the biblical Sabbath. Salvation is by faith alone in God's completed work though Jesus Christ. Works are a demonstration of faith and not essential for salvation.

Seventh Day Adventists take very seriously the words of John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This verse reveals the love of God (He so loved), the extent of His love (the world), the giving nature of God He

gave), the sacrificial nature of God's Son, the requirement for salvation (belief) and the reward for that belief (everlasting life).

This verse also reveals that those who do not believe will simply perish. The Greek word translated 'perish' in the original is '*apollumi*,' meaning to destroy fully and completely. Hence eternity will, for them, be complete and utter destruction not a lingering slow eternal burning.

Although Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible as their only creed, they hold certain fundamental beliefs to be the teaching of the Holy Scriptures that constitute the church's understanding and expression of the teaching of Scripture. (These are reproduced here with permission.)

1. The Holy Scriptures: The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to man the knowledge

necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the authoritative revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history.

2. The Trinity: There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. He is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole creation.

3. The Father: God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also revelations of the Father.

4. The Son: God the eternal Son became incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through Him all

things were created, the character of God is revealed, the salvation of humanity is accomplished, and the world is judged. Forever truly God, He became also truly man, Jesus the Christ. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived and experienced temptation as a human being, but perfectly exemplified the righteousness and love of God. By His miracles He manifested God's power and was attested as God's promised Messiah. He suffered and died voluntarily on the cross for our sins and in our place, was raised from the dead, and ascended to minister in the heavenly sanctuary in our behalf. He will come again in glory for the final deliverance of His people and the restoration of all things.

5. The Holy Spirit: God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts

human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth.

6. Creation: God is Creator of all things, and has revealed in Scripture the authentic account of His creative activity. In six days the Lord made “the heaven and the earth” and all living things upon the earth, and rested on the seventh day of that first week. Thus He established the Sabbath as a perpetual memorial of His completed creative work. The first man and woman were made in the image of God as the crowning work of Creation, given dominion over the world, and charged with responsibility to care for it. When the world was finished it was ``very good,” declaring the glory of God.

7. The Nature of Man: Man and woman were made in the image of God with

individuality, the power and freedom to think and to do. Though created free beings, each is an indivisible unity of body, mind, and spirit, dependent upon God for life and breath and all else. When our first parents disobeyed God, they denied their dependence upon Him and fell from their high position under God. The image of God in them was marred and they became subject to death. Their descendants share this fallen nature and its consequences. They are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. But God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself and by His Spirit restores in penitent mortals the image of their Maker. Created for the glory of God, they are called to love Him and one another, and to care for their environment.

8. The Great Controversy: All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. This conflict originated in heaven

when a created being, endowed with freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God's adversary, and led into rebellion a portion of the angels. He introduced the spirit of rebellion into this world when he led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity, the disordering of the created world, and its eventual devastation at the time of the worldwide flood. Observed by the whole creation, this world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation.

9. The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ: In Christ's life of perfect obedience to God's will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal

life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. This perfect atonement vindicates the righteousness of God's law and the graciousness of His character; for it both condemns our sin and provides for our forgiveness. The death of Christ is substitutionary and expiatory, reconciling and transforming. The resurrection of Christ proclaims God's triumph over the forces of evil, and for those who accept the atonement assures their final victory over sin and death. It declares the Lordship of Jesus Christ, before whom every knee in heaven and on earth will bow.

10. The Experience of Salvation: In infinite love and mercy God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might be made the righteousness of God. Led by the Holy Spirit we sense our need, acknowledge our sinfulness, repent of our transgressions, and exercise faith in Jesus as Lord and Christ, as Substitute and Example. This faith which

receives salvation comes through the divine power of the Word and is the gift of God's grace. Through Christ we are justified, adopted as God's sons and daughters, and delivered from the lordship of sin. Through the Spirit we are born again and sanctified; the Spirit renews our minds, writes God's law of love in our hearts, and we are given the power to live a holy life. Abiding in Him we become partakers of the divine nature and have the assurance of salvation now and in the judgment.

11. The Church: The church is the community of believers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. In continuity with the people of God in Old Testament times, we are called out from the world; and we join together for worship, for fellowship, for instruction in the Word, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, for service to all mankind, and for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. The church derives its authority from Christ, who is the incarnate Word, and from the

Scriptures, which are the written Word. The church is God's family; adopted by Him as children, its members live on the basis of the new covenant. The church is the body of Christ, a community of faith of which Christ Himself is the Head. The church is the bride for whom Christ died that He might sanctify and cleanse her. At His return in triumph, He will present her to Himself a glorious church, the faithful of all the ages, the purchase of His blood, not having spot or wrinkle, but holy and without blemish.

12. The Remnant and Its Mission: The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This remnant announces the arrival of the judgment hour, proclaims salvation through Christ, and heralds the approach of His second advent. This proclamation is symbolized by the three angels

of Revelation 14; it coincides with the work of judgment in heaven and results in a work of repentance and reform on earth. Every believer is called to have a personal part in this worldwide witness. (Rev. 12:17; 14:6-12; 18:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:10; Jude 3, 14; 1 Peter 1:16-19; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Rev. 21:1-14.)

13. Unity in the Body of Christ: The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all. This unity has its source in the oneness of the triune God,

who has adopted us as His children.

14. Baptism: By baptism we confess our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and testify of our death to sin and of our purpose to walk in newness of life. Thus we acknowledge Christ as Lord and Saviour, become His people, and are received as members by His church. Baptism is a symbol of our union with Christ, the forgiveness of our sins, and our reception of the Holy Spirit. It is by immersion in water and is contingent on an affirmation of faith in Jesus and evidence of repentance of sin. It follows instruction in the Holy Scriptures and acceptance of their teachings.

15. The Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper is a participation in the emblems of the body and blood of Jesus as an expression of faith in Him, our Lord and Saviour. In this experience of communion Christ is present to meet and strengthen His people. As we partake, we joyfully proclaim the Lord's death until He

comes again. Preparation for the Supper includes self-examination, repentance, and confession. The Master ordained the service of foot washing to signify renewed cleansing, to express a willingness to serve one another in Christlike humility, and to unite our hearts in love. The communion service is open to all believing Christians.

16. Spiritual Gifts and Ministries: God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts which each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. Given by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who apportions to each member as He wills, the gifts provide all abilities and ministries needed by the church to fulfill its divinely ordained functions. According to the Scriptures, these gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and

encouragement of people. Some members are called of God and endowed by the Spirit for functions recognized by the church in pastoral, evangelistic, apostolic, and teaching ministries particularly needed to equip the members for service, to build up the church to spiritual maturity, and to foster unity of the faith and knowledge of God. When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God's varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love.

17. The Gift of Prophecy: One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen. G. White . As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by

which all teaching and experience must be tested.

18. The Law of God: The great principles of God's law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God's love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. These precepts are the basis of God's covenant with His people and the standard in God's judgment. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit they point out sin and awaken a sense of need for a Saviour. Salvation is all of grace and not of works, but its fruitage is obedience to the Commandments. This obedience develops Christian character and results in a sense of well-being. It is an evidence of our love for the Lord and our concern for our fellow men. The obedience of faith demonstrates the power of Christ to transform lives, and therefore strengthens Christian witness.

19. The Sabbath: The beneficent Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom. The Sabbath is God's perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and redemptive acts.

20. Stewardship: We are God's stewards, entrusted by Him with time and opportunities,

abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. We are responsible to Him for their proper use. We acknowledge God's ownership by faithful service to Him and our fellow men, and by returning tithes and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church. Stewardship is a privilege given to us by God for nurture in love and the victory over selfishness and covetousness. The steward rejoices in the blessings that come to others as a result of his faithfulness.

21. Christian Behavior: We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with the principles of heaven. For the Spirit to recreate in us the character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things which will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty. While recognizing cultural differences, our dress is to be simple,

modest, and neat, befitting those whose true beauty does not consist of outward adornment but in the imperishable ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit. It also means that because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, we are to care for them intelligently. Along with adequate exercise and rest, we are to adopt the most healthful diet possible and abstain from the unclean foods identified in the Scriptures. Since alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and the irresponsible use of drugs and narcotics are harmful to our bodies, we are to abstain from them as well. Instead, we are to engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholesomeness, joy, and goodness.

22. Marriage and the Family: Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. For the Christian a marriage commitment is to God as well as to the spouse, and should be entered

into only between partners who share a common faith. Mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the love, sanctity, closeness, and permanence of the relationship between Christ and His church. Regarding divorce, Jesus taught that the person who divorces a spouse, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. Although some family relationships may fall short of the ideal, marriage partners who fully commit themselves to each other in Christ may achieve loving unity through the guidance of the Spirit and the nurture of the church. God blesses the family and intends that its members shall assist each other toward complete maturity. Parents are to bring up their children to love and obey the Lord. By their example and their words they are to teach them that Christ is a loving disciplinarian, ever tender and caring, who wants them to become members of His body, the family of God. Increasing family closeness

is one of the earmarks of the final gospel message.

23. Christ's Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary: There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly

intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent.

24. The Second Coming of Christ: The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel. The Saviour's coming will be literal, personal, visible, and worldwide. When He returns, the righteous dead will be resurrected, and together with the righteous living will be glorified and taken to heaven, but the unrighteous will die.

The almost complete fulfillment of most lines of prophecy, together with the present condition of the world, indicates that Christ's coming is imminent. The time of that event has not been revealed, and we are therefore exhorted to be ready at all times.

25. Death and Resurrection: The wages of sin is death. But God, who alone is immortal, will grant eternal life to His redeemed. Until that day death is an unconscious state for all people. When Christ, who is our life, appears, the resurrected righteous and the living righteous will be glorified and caught up to meet their Lord. The second resurrection, the resurrection of the unrighteous, will take place a thousand years later.

26. The Millennium and the End of Sin: The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. During this time the wicked dead will be judged; the earth will be utterly desolate, without living human

inhabitants, but occupied by Satan and his angels. At its close Christ with His saints and the Holy City will descend from heaven to earth. The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected, and with Satan and his angels will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever.

27. The New Earth: On the new earth, in which righteousness dwells, God will provide an eternal home for the redeemed and a perfect environment for everlasting life, love, joy, and learning in His presence. For here God Himself will dwell with His people, and suffering and death will have passed away. The great controversy will be ended, and sin will be no more. All things, animate and inanimate, will declare that God is love; and He shall reign forever. Amen.

Shenism or Zongjiao

(Chinese religion)

Chinese religion is not an organized church, but an amalgamation of different religions and beliefs including Taoism and Buddhism. Upon death, worshipers are judged. The good are sent either to a Buddhist paradise or a Tao dwelling place. The bad are sent to hell for a period of time and then reincarnated.

Shinto

The predominant religion of Japan believes that the country of Japan fell from the heavens, the Emperor is a god and the people are children of the gods. In the Shinto religion, Japanese supremacy and maintaining it was equivalent to heaven on earth.

In Shinto shrines, a form of ancestor worship is practiced, since their idea of heaven is to live on through their descendants. In the

Shinto religion, the afterlife was originally conceived as a dire, Hades-like realm. Matters of the afterlife have now been transferred to Buddhism.

Salvation in Shinto is dependent on penance and avoiding impurity or pollution of the soul. Shinto stresses belief in a great many spiritual beings and gods, known as kami, who are paid tribute at shrines and honored by festivals, and reverence for ancestors.

While there is no overall dogma, adherents of Shinto are expected to remember and celebrate the kami, support the societies of which the kami are patrons, remain pure and sincere, and enjoy life. Then one's soul can join those of its ancestors.

Sikhism

Sikhism is an amalgamation of Islam, Hinduism and several other Indian religions, so they have similar features.

In Sikhism, repeating God's name and the love of mankind will bring you to the same objective as the Hindu religion.

The main differences between Hinduism and Sikhism are social and political rather than spiritual.

Sikhism was created in reaction to the conflict between Hinduism and Islam, and shows influence from Hinduism, although Sikhs, like Muslims, are monotheistic.

In Hinduism the caste system locks you into the social status in which you are born. These stations are separated by wealth and position and no social movement is permitted.

Sikhism was an effort to maintain some of the ideas of Hinduism but eliminate the caste system. Sikhs place a great moral value on the brotherhood and equality of man.

Sikhism is open to all through the teachings of its 10 Gurus enshrined in the Sikh Holy Book and Living Guru, Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

In Sikhism, ‘Evil’ is merely human

selfishness. Salvation is attained by living an honest life and meditating on god.

If good works are performed sufficiently, the worshiper is released from the cycle of reincarnation and becomes one with god.

150 Doctrines of Faith

T

Taoism

Taoism, like several other Eastern religions (such as Shinto, Chinese folk religions and Sikhism), adopted many of its afterlife principles from Buddhism.

Initially, Taoists didn't concern themselves with worries of the afterlife and, instead, concentrated on creating a utopian society. Taoism is a type of belief, or a way of thinking about life.

It is at least 2,500 years old and said to be more of a philosophy than a religion as they have no Deity or worship rituals.

Salvation can be reached by aligning with the cosmos and receiving aid from supernatural immortals who resided on mountains, islands, and other earthly locales.

Taoism is the belief in balancing forces, or

yin and yang. These ideas represent matching pairs, such as light and dark, hot and cold, action and inaction, which work together toward a universal whole, which is the main goal of this practice. The result is believed to be immortality.

More recently, Taoists abandoned the quest for immortality and adopted a new set of afterlife teachings. The main activity for Taoists is the effort to be in harmony with the Tao and thus live a balanced life.

U

Unitarianism or Universalists

Unitarians, comprised of mostly atheists (or non-theists), agnostics, Humanists, liberal Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Neopagans, etc., are allowed to and encouraged to believe anything they like about the afterlife and how to get there. In general, they believe people should seek enlightenment in this life and not worry too much about an afterlife.

The denomination's origin is from the merger of the Universal Church of America (organized in 1779) and the American Unitarian Association (founded in 1823). They profess no creed. They have strong social, ethical concerns, and emphasize the search for religious truth through freedom of belief. They

accept theists, humanists, and agnostics in religious fellowship.

They believe in universal salvation claiming that God (sometimes identified as female) will save everyone because most Unitarians do not believe in the existence of a hell.

They do not regard Jesus as God, and not all Unitarians believe in heaven, still other Unitarians believe in reincarnation.

Someone has facetiously said that there is no Universal doctrine among Universalists and no unity of doctrine among those who call themselves Unitarians.

United Church of Christ

Formed in 1957 by the union of the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Churches. Belief in the Bible is guided by the Statement of

Faith (written in 1959). Salvation is achieved through honest and generous living and a personal and pious devotional life

Uniting Church

Officially united with the Basis of Union declaration in 1977, the majority of Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians formed the Uniting Church.

Liturgical practice reflects the variety of traditions within the Church, from informal to structured worship.

Salvation is through observance of the expectations of the clergy and a reflection of the faiths communities that formed the Uniting Church - vis Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians.

V, W

Wesleyanism (or Wesleyism)

See Methodism

Wicca

Wiccans believe many different things about the afterlife, but most seem to agree that there is no need for salvation. People either live in harmony with the earth goddess by caring for her physical manifestation or they don't, and their bad karma is returned to them threefold.

Some believe souls are reincarnated until they learn all their life lessons and become one with the goddess/mother earth. Some are so committed to following her or his individual

path that they believe individuals thoughts determine what will happen when they die; if worshipers think they're going to be reincarnated or sent to hell or joined with the goddess, they will be.

Others refuse to contemplate the afterlife at all. In any case, they don't believe in sin or anything they need saving from.

The new 'low works' version of Wicca, follows something called the Wiccan Rede. It essentially says you can do whatever you want as long as you do not harm anyone. It ironically still involves work as it requires you to do the work of "no harm."

Witnesses

See Jehovah's Witnesses

X, Y, Z

Zen Buddhism

Zen Buddhism was founded in Japan by Bodhidharma and spread to China, India, and The United States of America.

Bodhidharma was a semi-legendary Buddhist monk who lived during the 5th or 6th century CE. He is traditionally credited as the transmitter of Chan Buddhism to China, and is regarded as its first Chinese patriarch.

Their major texts are the sacred works of Mahayana Buddhism and from Koans. Zen Buddhism was based on meditation (there are no gods, just meditation and spiritual enlightenment).

There are two major schools of Zen. The first is the Rinzai. They meditate on the meaning of Koans while sitting cross-legged. The other class is Soto. They sit in the same

position and read from sacred works of Mahayana Buddhism. They both work closely with a master who guides their search for satori (salvation), and believe that physical labour contributes to attainment of enlightenment.

Zongjiao

See Shenism

Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism was founded by Spenta Zarathustra sometime around 1500 to 1000 BCE in ancient Persia. He preached monotheism with a single supreme god, Ahura Mazda. Zoroastrianism became the state religion of various Persian empires, until the 7th Century CE.

Zoroastrianism state that the afterlife is dependent upon one's actions in life. They believe that there is no reincarnation, just a

simple judgment four days after death. After a sufficient amount of time in hell, however, even the condemned can go to heaven. To be judged righteous, one can use knowledge or devotion, but the most effective way to righteousness is through action.

It is a very ancient religion, nearly extinct. There are still some that practice Zoroastrianism in the world today. It is a religion that comes from Iran and has been practiced in India and Afghanistan. Their idea of salvation is that if the individual struggles against evil and wins, they go into the place called heaven. Therefore, their concept of salvation: a winning struggle against evil in one's life

The sacred book of the Zoroastrian religion is the *Avesta*. The original was destroyed by Alexander the Great, so we have only quotations from it. It's unfortunate that the original was destroyed because followers of this religion say the original contained all

knowledge.

FIN

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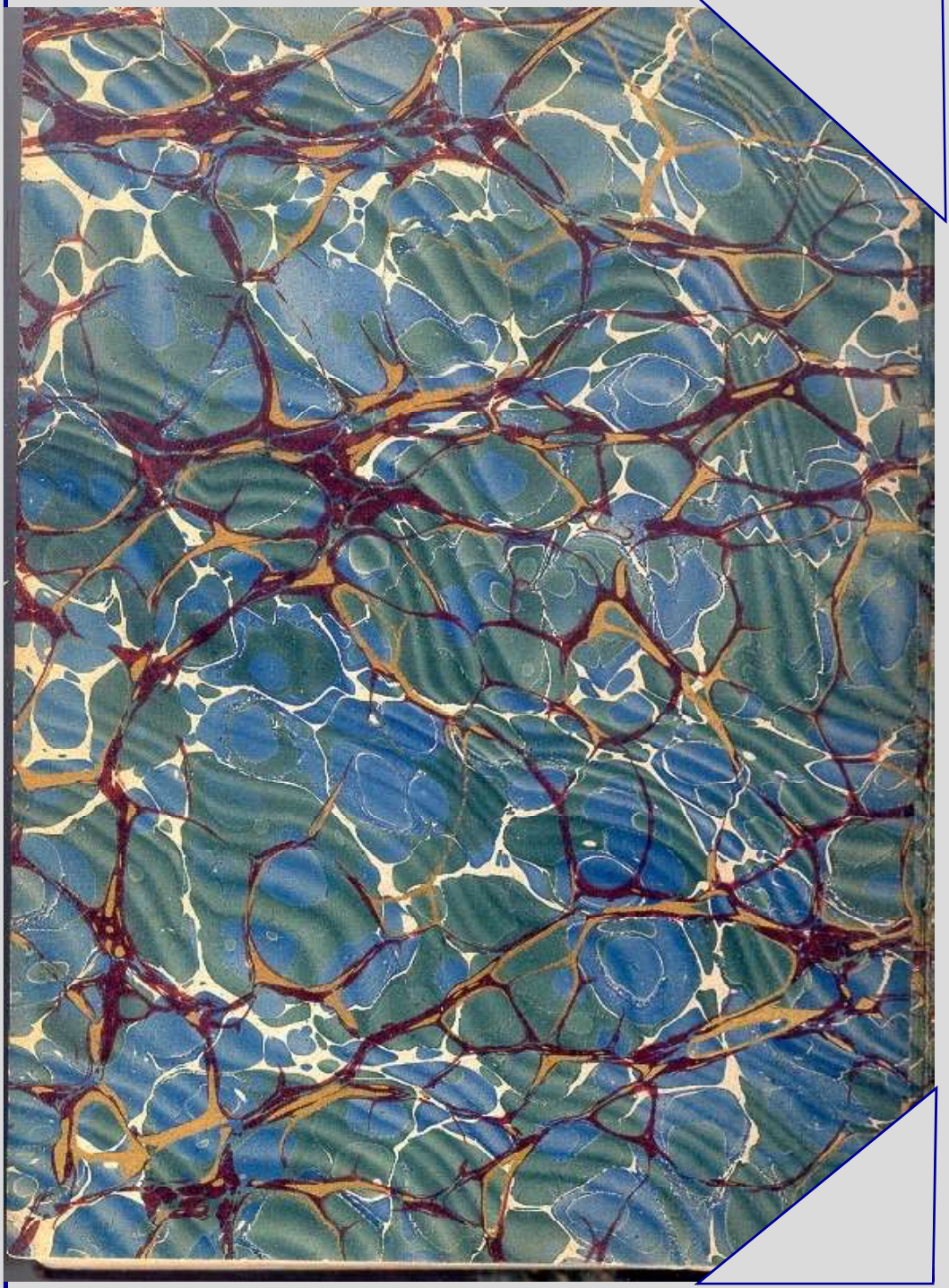

Seventh Day
Baptist